

TESTIMONY OF
GUSTAV UHLICH, M.D.
BEFORE THE
HOUSE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MAY 9, 2006

I was born in Austria in 1929. By the time I was six-years old, my parents had moved to Yugoslavia. In order to attend the nearest grade school, I had to learn how to speak the Slovenian language. With the help of my parents and some playmates, it took me only a few weeks to get along well. After graduating from high school in Austria, I earned my medical degree at the University of Graz in 1954. In 1955, I came to the United States with an exchange student visa good for one year. I was impressed by my experience and decided to move to the United States as soon as possible. Strict immigration rules were in place at that time. They included:

1. Return to your country of origin for three years after our exchange visit.
2. Adequate knowledge of the English language.
3. Adequate knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and the rules of government.
4. Advance job arrangement
5. Sponsorship of immigrant by a U.S. citizen

I focused my attention and energy on meeting the above requirements and arrived in Detroit as a fully certified immigrant in 1959. In 1965, I became a naturalized citizen of the United States of America.

After finishing my medical residency at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, I moved to Petoskey, Michigan where I have lived ever since.

Working for 30 years with a multi-specialty group of physicians at the Burns Clinic Medical Center, P.C. taught me to appreciate the advantages of close cooperation versus relentless competition. Cooperation in any civilized group or society requires communication and mutual understanding. Effective communication requires that you speak the same language as your fellow citizens. I am, therefore, fully in support of passing a law that proclaims English the official language in the State of Michigan. It will serve the common good and encourage the use of common sense as a tool for solving common problems.

Gustav Uhlich, M.D.
PO Box 721
Petoskey, MI 49770
231-347-8819